

### REMARKS

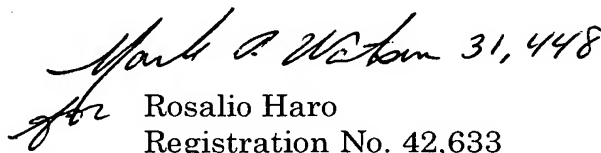
Claims 1-64 are pending in the application. Claims 1-22 are presented for consideration. Claims 23-64 were previously withdrawn from consideration. No claim is amended. No claim is cancelled.

Claims 1-17, and 19-22 are currently rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,734,029 to Furusawa. Claim 18 is currently rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 6,734,029 to Furusawa in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,585,566 to Takeda.

Applicants herein submit an official English translation of the foreign application (Japan 2000-390166, filed December 22, 2000), see attachment, upon which the foreign priority date of the present invention is based. The foreign priority date of the present application (Dec. 22, 2000) thus predates the U.S. priority date (June 29, 2001) of the Furusawa reference. Applicants therefore re-assert that U.S. Patent. No. 6,734,029 is not a valid prior art reference as it has a later effective filing date than the present application.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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